



For Release: Wednesday, January 16, 2019

19-93-BOS

NEW ENGLAND INFORMATION OFFICE: Boston, Mass.

Technical information: (617) 565-2327 BLSInfoBoston@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/new-england

Media contact: (617) 565-2326 BLSMediaBoston@bls.gov

County Employment and Wages in Massachusetts – Second Quarter 2018

Employment increased in 8 of the 9 large counties in Massachusetts from June 2017 to June 2018. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or greater as measured by 2017 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that Suffolk (1.9 percent) and Middlesex (1.7 percent) had over-the-year employment gains that were larger than the 1.5-percent national average. (See table 1)

Nationally, 309 of the 349 large counties had employment gains from June 2017 to June 2018. The largest over-the-year percentage gain was recorded in Midland, TX (11.6 percent). McLean, IL, had the largest over-the-year decrease in employment (-2.0 percent).

Among the nine large counties in Massachusetts, employment was highest in Middlesex (934,800) in June 2018, followed by Suffolk (684,700). Together, Massachusetts' large counties accounted for 93.7 percent of total employment within the commonwealth. Nationwide, the 349 largest counties made up 72.9 percent of total U.S. employment in June 2018.

Average weekly wages increased in all of the large counties in Massachusetts from the second quarter of 2017 to the second quarter of 2018. Essex County had the largest wage gain, up 6.6 percent. Suffolk (3.7 percent) and Middlesex (3.4 percent) recorded the next highest wage growth. Suffolk County had the highest average weekly wage at \$1,711, followed by Middlesex County at \$1,571. Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 3.4 percent over the year to \$1,055 in the second quarter of 2018. (See [table 1](#).)

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the five counties in Massachusetts with employment below 75,000. All five of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

Large County Wage Changes

Two of the nine large counties in Massachusetts recorded wage growth above the national increase of 3.4 percent. Essex County's 6.6-percent annual wage gain ranked 10th among the 349 largest U.S. counties in the second quarter of June 2018. Suffolk (3.7 percent) placed in the top-third for wage growth nationwide. Plymouth County had the smallest annual wage gain in the commonwealth, at 0.1 percent, and ranked 339th among the large U.S. counties. (See [table 1](#).)

Of the 349 largest U.S. counties, 340 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Nationwide, Marin, CA, ranked first in average weekly wage growth, with an increase of 11.7 percent from the second quarter of 2017. Eight large U.S. counties had wage declines over the year. New Hanover, NC, had the largest percentage decline in average weekly wages with a loss of 6.4 percent.

Large County Average Weekly Wages

Average weekly wages in four of Massachusetts' large counties were above the national average of \$1,055 in the second quarter of 2018 and all ranked in the top-fifth nationwide. Two of these counties placed in the top 10 nationwide: Suffolk (\$1,711, 6th) and Middlesex (\$1,571, 10th). Barnstable County (\$893, 242nd) had the lowest average weekly wage among the large counties in the commonwealth.

Average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 94 of the 349 largest U.S. counties. Santa Clara, CA, held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,573. San Mateo, CA, was second with an average weekly wage of \$2,357, followed by San Francisco, CA (\$2,083), New York, NY (\$2,025), and Washington, DC (\$1,713).

More than two-thirds of the largest U.S. counties (255) reported average weekly wages below the national average in the second quarter of 2018. The lowest weekly wage was reported in Horry SC (\$625), followed by the Texas counties Cameron (\$642), Hidalgo (\$645) and Webb (\$687). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than one-third of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, CA (\$2,573).

Average Weekly Wages in Massachusetts' Smaller Counties

All five counties in Massachusetts with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$1,055. Among these smaller counties, Nantucket had the highest average weekly wage at \$1,008 and Franklin reported the lowest at \$797.

When all 14 counties in Massachusetts were considered, three counties had average weekly wages below \$899. Five counties reported weekly wages ranging from \$900 to \$999, two had wages from \$1,000 to \$1,099, and four had wages above \$1,100. The two highest-paid counties were located in the Boston metropolitan area, which includes the area encircled by Highway 128. (See [chart 1](#).)

Additional Statistics and other Information

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in table 3. For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2016 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2017 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2016 are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn16.htm. The 2017 edition of Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online will be available in September 2018.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Services: 1-800-877-8339.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 9 largest counties in Massachusetts, second quarter 2018

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, second quarter 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	147431.2	1.5	--	\$1,055	--	3.4	--
Massachusetts	3650.1	1.0	--	1,322	2	3.5	12
Barnstable, MA	108.3	-0.6	340	893	242	2.9	185
Bristol, MA	232.8	0.2	293	975	169	2.3	244
Essex, MA	334.2	0.8	219	1,163	54	6.6	10
Hampden, MA	210.5	0.5	257	916	212	2.1	261
Middlesex, MA	934.8	1.7	118	1,571	10	3.4	124
Norfolk, MA	359.5	0.1	303	1,230	38	3.3	136
Plymouth, MA	200.4	0.7	235	999	146	0.1	339
Suffolk, MA	684.7	1.9	103	1,711	6	3.7	93
Worcester, MA	354.0	0.7	235	1,039	104	2.9	185

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all the counties in Massachusetts, second quarter 2018

Area	Employment June 2018	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	147,431,154	\$1,055
Massachusetts	3,650,065	1,322
Barnstable	108,332	893
Berkshire	63,179	880
Bristol	232,785	975
Dukes	11,202	946
Essex	334,157	1,163
Franklin	27,463	797
Hampden	210,529	916
Hampshire	68,293	938
Middlesex	934,783	1,571
Nantucket	9,769	1,008
Norfolk	359,489	1,230
Plymouth	200,428	999
Suffolk	684,662	1,711
Worcester	353,974	1,039

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Covered employment and wages include workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, second quarter 2018

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2017-18	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2017-18	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	147,431.2	1.5	\$1,055	--	3.4	--
Alabama	1,969.9	1.2	882	37	2.8	35
Alaska	335.8	-0.9	1,043	15	3.7	9
Arizona	2,770.8	2.6	973	23	3.3	19
Arkansas	1,214.6	0.7	824	47	1.7	47
California	17,473.1	1.9	1,265	4	4.6	3
Colorado	2,704.4	2.4	1,075	10	3.2	27
Connecticut	1,704.5	0.3	1,218	5	0.1	50
Delaware	454.3	1.3	1,023	17	1.4	49
District of Columbia	777.3	1.3	1,713	1	2.6	39
Florida	8,568.9	2.1	931	28	2.9	32
Georgia	4,440.5	2.0	979	22	2.3	43
Hawaii	658.3	0.5	956	24	2.5	41
Idaho	745.3	3.1	794	50	3.8	8
Illinois	6,061.1	0.8	1,097	9	3.4	14
Indiana	3,075.8	1.1	883	36	2.8	35
Iowa	1,583.7	0.8	880	39	3.3	19
Kansas	1,393.3	1.0	879	40	3.4	14
Kentucky	1,905.9	0.9	882	37	2.3	43
Louisiana	1,918.6	0.4	901	33	3.7	9
Maine	636.8	1.0	843	45	3.6	11
Maryland	2,712.0	0.7	1,141	8	3.4	14
Massachusetts	3,650.1	1.0	1,322	2	3.5	12
Michigan	4,424.7	1.3	997	20	2.9	32
Minnesota	2,925.6	0.8	1,072	12	3.3	19
Mississippi	1,130.7	0.2	752	51	2.7	38
Missouri	2,829.0	0.5	924	30	3.9	7
Montana	478.7	1.1	817	48	2.5	41
Nebraska	990.8	0.6	859	43	3.1	29
Nevada	1,372.4	3.1	931	28	3.3	19
New Hampshire	670.8	0.8	1,049	14	3.3	19
New Jersey	4,157.0	0.9	1,201	7	2.3	43
New Mexico	823.6	1.0	852	44	3.5	12
New York	9,579.2	1.7	1,297	3	4.5	4
North Carolina	4,450.2	2.2	933	25	3.3	19
North Dakota	426.1	0.8	986	21	3.4	14
Ohio	5,461.3	0.7	933	25	2.3	43
Oklahoma	1,606.4	1.2	875	41	3.2	27
Oregon	1,947.3	1.5	999	18	3.3	19
Pennsylvania	5,924.9	1.1	1,031	16	3.1	29
Rhode Island	491.0	0.7	998	19	1.7	47
South Carolina	2,126.5	3.4	833	46	0.0	51
South Dakota	439.7	0.9	807	49	2.8	35
Tennessee	2,994.1	1.6	932	27	2.9	32
Texas	12,326.3	2.2	1,062	13	3.4	14
Utah	1,483.9	3.4	899	35	4.3	5
Vermont	312.4	-0.8	907	31	4.3	5
Virginia	3,941.0	1.3	1,073	11	2.6	39
Washington	3,444.1	2.7	1,218	5	6.9	1
West Virginia	702.9	1.6	868	42	4.8	2
Wisconsin	2,933.5	0.9	904	32	3.3	19
Wyoming	282.2	0.5	901	33	3.0	31
Puerto Rico	853.5	-2.3	543	(3)	5.2	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, second quarter 2018 - Continued

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2017-18	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2017-18	National ranking by percent change
Virgin Islands	33.4	-14.4	838	(3)	12.8	(3)

Footnotes:

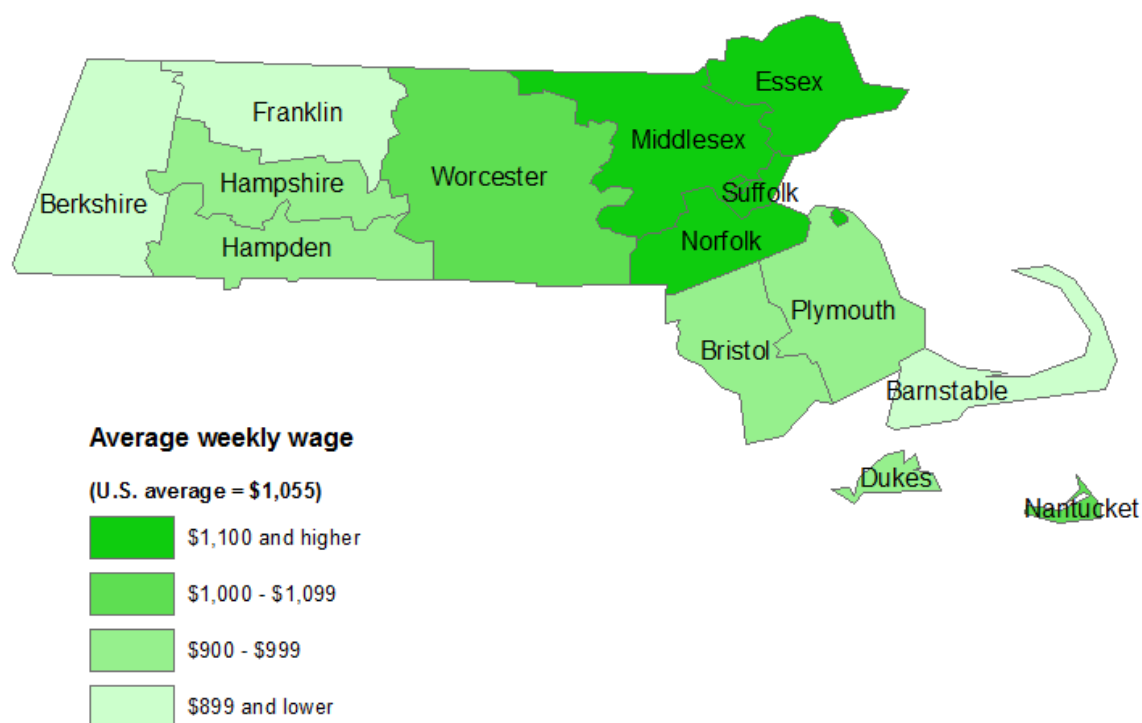
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages
by county in Massachusetts,
second quarter 2018



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.